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## Symposium on

### *The Familial State: Ruling Families and Mer- chant Capitalism in Early Modern Europe*

**Julia Adams**

**Yale University**

**Cornell University Press  
2005**

Julia Adams' *The Familial State* studies the rise and fall of Dutch hegemony in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, with France and England as comparative and contending cases. Adams argues that patrimonial state formation cannot be understood without an examination of the ways in which elite family heads reproduce and regulate the structure of rule. In the process, she revises state theory, putting gender squarely at the center of state formation.

In this issue Ivan Ermakoff, Mounira Charrad, Leslie Price, and Charles Tilly examine Adams' claims and their implications for state theory, and Adams responds. Also in this issue: the future of our sub-discipline as reflected in eight fascinating recent dissertations, the CHS program in Montreal, and announcements and publications of section members.

## Toppling Papa

Charles Tilly  
Columbia University

With Elisabeth S. Clemens and Ann Shola Orloff, Julia Adams has recently issued a sweeping critique of historical sociology. Among other things, the critique tells us that a second wave of historical sociology centered on Marxist questions (although not necessarily Marxist answers) surged during the 1970s, but has now spent itself. From resurgent Marxism those second wavers drew vital, vigorous, and often contradictory ideas concerning origins and destinies of the modern world. But they became captives of their own momentum, moving heedlessly in one direction.

The second wavers, Adams and her colleagues claim, still cling to the illusion of settled modernity. What is more, they defend their obsolete conceptions by means of intellectual power plays:

Historical sociologists, like other academics and intellectuals, have unconsciously depended on this sense of settlement, of achieved modernity, and are disoriented by its loss. So it is natural when they react with nostalgia for old totalities, a past of imagined theoretical stability, or with a sense of perceived threat – by policing the boundaries of intellectual inquiry to try to forcibly settle things anew or by simply refusing to debate or consider new ways of thinking (Adams, Clemens and Orloff 2005: 68).

Take that, second wavers! As you seep into the sand, a new generation of analysts, Julia Adams among them, will confront the postmodern condition.

Wave-watchers have waited a long time for Adams' book-length exposition of her own contribution to the new wave. It draws on family and administrative archives in the Hague, Utrecht, and Amsterdam, plus a wide range of published sources<sup>1</sup>. It demonstrates convincingly that Dutch

oligarchs who sought to advance their patrilineages by means of canny investment combined with public office at the municipal and provincial levels played an extraordinary part in the successes, failures, and distinctive characteristics of the Dutch Republic during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

For comparative-historical students of political processes, Adams performs a spectacular service. She demonstrates how it is possible to join the historiography of a much-debated case while gracefully maintaining contact with an exceptional range of social theory. She casts new light on how the Dutch state worked, and takes positions in historians' disagreements over such questions as the place of Calvinism in the formation of the Dutch East India Company. But she also connects her analysis repeatedly with past and current theories of social processes: historical institutionalism, cultural feminism, and much more. Since she centers her arguments on patrimonialism, Max Weber inevitably assumes pride of place.

At the start, Adams claims mainly to show that patrimonial forms played much larger parts in Dutch and European state transformations than previous analysts have understood. By the end, however, her claims have expanded:

But I hope to have convinced readers that patriarchy cannot simply be added as an asterisk to fiscal-military preoccupations that remain otherwise undisturbed. It raises a far more fundamental challenge to second-wave accounts of state formation and breakdown, for it bears on the forms of power and authority that characterize emergent political systems: their invention, their languages, their discursive tensions and possibilities, and whether they are sustainable or not. The early modern patrimonial state and its sovereign arms or extensions would not have existed without the concept of father rule and associated patriarchal practices of power (Adams 2005: 200).

Patriarchal patrimonialism has by this point become not just a neglected feature but a necessary condition for the sorts of states that formed in

<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, this second waver felt a punch to the solar plexus on reading in Steven Pincus' back-cover blurb that "Unlike much of the previous generation of historical sociologists, Adams bases her claims on a mass of archival re-

search"; did I only imagine spending all those years in European archives?

Europe during the early modern period, and by extension for other states that grew up in their images.

Between its cautious start and its audacious end, *The Familial State* provides not only an account of the Dutch Republic's rise and (relative) decline, but also sketches of Dutch commercial ventures – notably the Dutch East India Company – and careful comparisons with English and French experiences during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The introduction, conclusion, and chapter 1 deal with general theoretical and methodological issues. Of the remaining five chapters, three deal with the Netherlands and two offer comparisons of the Netherlands, France, and England.

Along the way, Adams gestures toward all the major figures that have written recently about Dutch history and European state transformation during the two centuries. In well informed asides, she regularly states her assessment of controversies and contested theses, for example Robert Brenner's analysis of European transitions to capitalism and the fierce debate over whether, when, and how the Dutch economy declined. In a book containing only 202 pages of main text, facts and arguments therefore come close packed, with almost no space for sustained narratives.

Given Adams' attentiveness to previous writing on the Dutch Republic and European states, three surprises await any well-informed reader of European social history. First, despite frequent references to interpersonal networks and explicit evocations of parallels with analyses by Ronald Burt, John Padgett, and Christopher Ansell, no formal analyses of connections within and among families – not even network diagrams – appear in the book. Yet Adams argues that connections among elite families created a “patrimonial institutional center” connecting an enor-

mously fragmented and fissiparous administrative structure (73). Her counts of officeholders certainly establish how much elite families hoarded public and commercial offices. But to what extent and how did those families' marriage strategies balance the advantages and disadvantages of cross-lineage alliances?

Second, the book makes almost no connection with the vast literatures on Dutch, French, and English popular life during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: nothing substantial on proletarianization, on poverty, on migration, on consumption, on rebellions, on popular contention, on transformations of crafts and agriculture. The book's discussions of demography deal almost exclusively with the effects of fertility and mortality change on the continuity of elite families. As a consequence, the book delivers a top-down history without proposing an answer to a question that obsessed the second wavers: how on earth did these self-serving oligarchs and monarchs acquire compliance from the great mass of people outside the privileged elite?

Third, what happened to the women? If families, then women. Toward the book's midsection, Adams asks how women's understandings of family and lineage differed from men's, but then begs off those questions with the argument that “at this moment we know too little about the women's (much less children's) point of view to answer them” (91). Yet we actually know, for example, that women subscribed to 41 percent of all loans to the state during the period 1649-1650. As Marjolein 't Hart, who compiled the evidence, comments, “Appar-

ently, women had a significant say in the management of their funds” ('t Hart 1993: 174<sup>2</sup>). Research on popular struggles by Rudolf Dekker,

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<sup>2</sup> That the subscriptions 't Hart analyses drew funds from far beyond the elite, incidentally, again raises the question of how oligarchs maintained their rule.

Wayne te Brake and (for the Spanish Netherlands) Karin van Honacker has also provided insight concerning women's involvement in the region's public politics, if not into the mentalities lying behind elite family strategies. Adams has written top-down history from top-down – and largely masculine – sources.

Ironically, *The Familial State* takes us back firmly and rightly to issues that second wavers who drew on Marxist and marxisant history from below rejected self consciously: the rise and fall of dynasties, the histories of elite families, the processes by which new rulers came to power. The book shows persuasively that the varying organizations of state power exemplified by England, France, and the Dutch Republic all depended on integration of elite families, not merely of monarchs and their underlings, into systems of rule. The dialectic of bottom-up and top-down now cries out for synthesis.

## Rulers and Families

Mounira Charrad  
University of Texas, Austin

*The Familial State: Ruling Families and Merchant Capitalism in Early Modern Europe* stands as a convincing demonstration that questions of state formation and political organization are deeply connected to the dimensions of kinship, lineage, and family. Written in the tradition of comparative and historical sociology, the book focuses on the Netherlands as an idiosyncratic case which, as the first hegemonic economic and political entity in Western Europe, sheds light on similar processes but different outcomes elsewhere. Out of the six chapters, one is devoted to a theoretical discussion, three are on the Netherlands, and two compare developments in France and England. The time periods are the Dutch Golden Age in the seventeenth century when the Dutch established a position of world power through a global colonial system, and the decline of Dutch hegemony in the eighteenth century (although Adams is careful to point out that the timing of the decline is open to debate).

The purpose of the book is to consider both Dutch ascendancy and decline in an effort to “build the foundation of a more adequate explanation of historical hegemonies, of varying patterns of state formation and collapse in early modern Europe (p.12).” Adams treats the Netherlands in part as a “vehicle for tackling theoretical issues of the largest possible interest (p.7).” The analysis is based on the use of secondary sources and archival data. On each case and time period, the text moves from narratives, to Adams' own theoretical statements, to a discussion of major theories on specific points, inviting the reader to navigate among these different forms of discourse.

### *Rise and Decline*

The main actors whose story Adams relates are the elite patriarchal families, capitalist merchants and a locally grounded patrimonial state. Her central argument is that the relationships among these key actors, and the specific permutations in their relationships in different contexts, shaped the rise and decline of the Dutch state. Similarly, these relationships are essential to understanding the formation of the French and English states. Adams sees the Dutch Golden Age as resulting in part from a particular form of governance in which “elite merchant-regent family heads managed to lay claim to parts of the Dutch state, which became the de facto property of family lineages and clans (p. 4).” This form of governance was dominated by rules of family patrilineal succession in politics (p. 9). A crucial factor in the glory of the Golden Age thus was an institutional arrangement that fused the interests of elite patriarchal families with those of a merchant class able to develop colonial trade and those of regents holding local and regional power. Paternal rule, mercantilism (especially overseas expansion and long distance commerce) and political power all came together in what Adams calls “the patrimonial institutional nexus (p.5)”, the core of the familial state and the main basis for Dutch success.

Conversely, Dutch decline is ascribed to how the patrimonial institutional arrangements operated in the face of new exogenous forces such as commercial competition or military pressure. In particular, the ability of the state to respond to these forces in the eighteenth century was limited by the very same nexus that had been a source of success

earlier on. In a nutshell, the merchant/regent heads of families now clung to their diminishing economic privileges, the advantages of their lineage, and to a localized, dispersed form of power. This in turn froze the state into a local and familial form. That crippled its ability to become more centralized, to tap existing resources including taxation, and to expand its navy. In a new age and context, the nexus of family cliques, merchant class and patrimonial politics became an impediment to hegemony. Adams argues that, instead of seeing the “betrayal of the bourgeois” as the principal cause of Dutch decline, we should look towards the “loyalty of the patriarch -- loyalty to one’s family lineage and one’s collectively ratified, controlled, and, yes, enforced role in the state (p. 152).”

Other European states were also thoroughly familial in their early modern incarnations, as in England and France. How they entered the modern world depended in part on how oligarchs seeking to advance their patrilineages related to mercantilism and central power. In suggesting that, like a double edged sword, the familial state went from asset to liability, Adams offers an elegant and parsimonious argument for reversals in economic and political power in the Netherlands. In considering other countries with similar characteristics but different trajectories, she places the Netherlands in a comparative context and thereby offers a framework for analyzing additional cases.

#### *Patrimonialism and Patriarchy*

Two concepts are central to the formulation of what constitutes the “familial state”: patrimonialism and patriarchy, which Adams then joins in the template of patriarchal patrimonialism (p. 7). They have been historically related, as the book shows, but I suggest that we should keep the meaning of each distinct for analytical purposes. Patrimonialism refers to the relationship between the ruler and the ruled in the polity. Patriarchy refers to relationships among members, and more specifically to gender relations, within a household or a lineage. Adams uses the Weberian concept of patrimonial power, “that characteristic form of rule in which a ruler (such as monarch or a lesser lord...) and the corporations that the ruler recognizes or sponsors jointly do politics and share the prerogatives of sovereignty (p. 4).”

Patrimonialism involves an unstable balance of power in which either the ruler or the corporations may alternatively have the upper hand. Adams shows how in the situation of built-in instability in patrimonial politics, notables (who also tend to accumulate wealth) use family strategies to strengthen their hands.

She uses patriarchy in two different ways. The concept refers to signs and symbols that infuse the father with supreme authority, and extend to the ruler who is perceived as a symbolic father. Celebrating the father-son relation, families created elaborate mythologies honoring their lineage in early modern Europe, as “the successfully achieved social fiction of an unbroken line of honorable, preferably patrilineal, descent was what counted in establishing enduring claims to politico-economic privilege (p. 84).” The concept of patriarchy is also used to mean a set of practices. We learn that elite families exchanged women in mutually advantageous intermarriages. Family heads practiced the “politics of marriage” (p. 86), trying to marry well or to marry their children well. The control of marriage alliances was especially pronounced in the Dutch East Indies, where daughters were married off in their early teens (p. 88). In the Netherlands, the outer boundaries of choice in regard to a marriage partner were delimited by family needs.

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In stating that “The early modern patrimonial state and its sovereign arms or extensions would not have existed without the concept of father-rule and associated patriarchal practices of power” (200) Adams points not only to a close connection between patrimonialism and patriarchy, but to the father-rule and patriarchal practices as necessary to the functioning of the patrimonial state. She makes an argument for the “importance of a specific institution, -- patriarchal patrilineal relations of rule, interlocked with politico-economic development – in constructing and framing” (9) institutional developments in early modern Europe. In

the general framework proposed, patriarchy is treated as a necessary ingredient of patrimonialism, and as a link between the familial and political practices that constitute the familial state (p. 32). Reminding us that “Weber himself saw patriarchal domination not only as the purest logical form of traditional authority but as the historical seed of patrimonialism (p. 32),” Adams makes the important point that “patriarchy was one of the key principles on which the shifting sovereign center was constituted and defended (p. 74).”

Patriarchy is taken as a constant, however. It is conceptualized as part of patrimonialism, rather than as a separate dimension with its own dynamic. Changes in family practices or ideology do not appear as a central variable in the explanation of different political outcomes. Nor is the issue of how different patterns of state centralization may bring about different forms of patriarchy a central concern of the book. Essentially, the differences between the Netherlands, France and England have to do with the role of the crown and how it related to local arenas of power. As in the Netherlands, power in France rested on patriarchal dynastic legitimation and hereditary office holding (p. 111). The difference with the Netherlands was the growing role of the French crown in the political economy of patrimonial state formation and imperial colonial projects, which gave “officeholder families an increased stake in the patrimonial state rather than in independent trade or manufacturing” (113). In contrast, “English merchants were strongly represented in key areas of the patrimonial state.....Unlike France, self-organized merchant groups made and sus-

tained autonomous demands on the crown” (127). In England as well as in France, the key factor was the relationship between the crown and merchants, not the organization of family and kinship.

#### *Other States and Further Questions*

I find striking similarities between the kinship strategies in the Netherlands and those characteristic of states in formation in the first half of the twentieth century (Charrad 2001). Similar patterns could be observed in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) around the time of the emergence of newly formed national states following the end of colonial rule. There too, families skillfully crafted myths of common ancestry. As in the Netherlands, this did not apply only to the monarch and his entourage. It extended to local and regional notables, and in the case of MENA also to the powerless. There too, women were

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given in marriage in their teens and marriage alliances were worked out by families with an eye to their perceived collective interest. In the history of the Middle East, kin networks in the form of patrilineages functioned as cohesive groups with important macrolevel political consequences, making kin-based solidarities a building block of partially centralized states (Charrad 2001: 17-27). As in the Netherlands and early modern Europe, they constituted core institutional centers of power. The process of state formation in countries such as Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco entailed the integration and/or transformation of kin groupings that had served as the foundation of patrimonialism.

I agree with Adams' call for treating gender, family, and kinship as constituents of state power and institutions, a call made as well in Adams, Clemens and Orloff (2005: 49-56). *The Familial State* contributes to refuting the anthropological dichotomy between kin-centered systems of regulation in stateless societies and statist structures in societies that exhibit an institution that can be called a state. It shows how paternal authority and patriarchal status were core dimensions of patrimonial rule in the three cases of early modern Europe considered. This was true as well in patrimonial regimes in other parts of the world. Like other rich studies, this one gets you thinking about further questions. We need to do more to unpack complex theoretical issues such as the following: How do patrimonialism and patriarchy intersect in macro structural politics in different time periods? Is there a form of patrimonialism that is patriarchal and another that is not? Or is it a matter of degree and can patrimonialism be more or less patriarchal? Or are there several forms of kinship/family/gender with different impacts on patrimonialism and on the transition to centralized states? Or shall we look at the issue from another angle and ask if there are variants in the form of patrimonialism or in the transition to centralization that may have different impacts on family forms and gender relations? Are different kinship configurations associated with patrimonial rule in different world regions? These are questions to be considered if we are to further develop a comparative historical sociology of kinship/family/gender and state formation.

## The Dutch Republic and the Familial State

*Leslie Price*

*History, University of Hull*

It is not unknown for sociologists to turn their attention to Early Modern Europe: apart from the classic case of Max Weber's work on the relationship between the protestant ethic and the capitalist spirit (Weber, 1930), and the later groundbreaking study by Barrington Moore (Moore, 1967), there have been notable contributions more recently from – to choose almost at random – Anderson (1974), Goldstone (1991) and Gould (1987). With the exception of Weber's work, which sparked off a major debate<sup>3</sup>, such works have tended to attract considerable attention at first and then rather fade from view – at least as far as historians are concerned. Such studies have also paid very little attention to the Dutch Republic. Michael Mann, in the course of his majestic sweep from the ancient to the modern world was able to spare at least a fleeting glance for the Dutch Republic, and to see a strength in the Dutch state which was all too often overlooked by historians (1986, 475-83). However perceptive such comments, Mann had time for only a brief reference to the Dutch situation and his remarks are necessarily based on rather limited - not to say fragile - empirical foundations. In this context the new study by Julia Adams is particularly welcome as her initial focus is on the Dutch state before drawing back to compare the Dutch situation with that obtaining in France and England in the Early Modern Period.

All too often historians have taken the burgeoning monarchies of the Early Modern period – first Spain, then France and, in the eighteenth century, Austria and Prussia – as typical or even normative, and the surviving republics and similar more traditional polities have been dismissed as doomed survivals from the past. England has been regarded, particularly by English historians, as a sort of off-shore special case rather than as an integral

<sup>3</sup> However, this debate was to a large extent based on a fundamental misconception of Weber's argument, certainly by historians.

part of Europe.<sup>4</sup> This tendency to side-line any thing other than centralising princely states is particularly inappropriate given the political, economic and cultural significance of the Dutch state which emerged from the revolt against Spain. The Dutch Republic was the dominant economic power of seventeenth century Europe and also established the first trading empire on a global scale (Israel, 1989; de Vries and van der Woude, 1997). It became also, and not coincidentally, a major power in Europe and proved itself capable of defeating Spain in the first half of the seventeenth century, and leading the resistance against the dominance of France in the second. Culturally, too, it can be seen – if only retrospectively - to have been the equivalent of a great power. Yet the political system which governed this remarkably successful state has conventionally been regarded as an inefficient monstrosity, especially in comparison with the formally more coherent absolutist monarchies of the period. Perhaps this is hardly surprising when even Dutch contemporaries found it hard to decide just what sort of state they were living in (Prokopovich, 2004). Sociologists might be expected to display a certain immunity to such in-house prejudices of historians, and Adams recognises the achievements of the Dutch state and takes it as the starting point of her study.

Central to her analysis is the concept of the familial state, applied in the first instance to the Dutch Republic, and then moving on to the different forms it took in France and England. The strength of this approach is that it provides a tool to demonstrate the distinctiveness of the Dutch system while placing it within a broader political and social context common to all three countries. Adams' argument seems to be that this form of the state was a transitional one, constituting a vital phase in the emergence of the modern state in Europe. The weakness of this line of argument is that it is far from clear that the 'familial state' is anything more than a re-description of the oligarchic systems which are so familiar to historians of this period in Europe. Key terms in Adams' analysis are 'patrimonial' and 'patriarchal'<sup>5</sup> and

both terms are used liberally throughout - and indeed perhaps rather too loosely at times. It is not always clear what is meant specifically by patrimonial in this context, and it often seems to mean no more than the tendency of those acquiring wealth and political power to keep it in the family – which is hardly peculiar to these countries or to this historical period. Similarly, with regard to 'family government', it is certainly true that the Dutch oligarchy – the regents – is best understood as being composed of families rather than individuals, but this too was not peculiar to the Dutch Republic nor to this period of European history. With regard to patriarchy, its centrality to early modern society has long been recognised by historians. Indeed, that patriarchal authority was fundamental to society, and that monarchical power was essentially patriarchal in both origin and form, was a commonplace of the period and could be found in a whole range of contemporary writings from formal political theory to moral homilies.

Perhaps what makes Adams' familial state distinctive is the way in which she sees the oligarchies and the developing state interacting in this period. The Dutch Republic is, of course, the most extreme example of this phenomenon: here the oligarchy *was* the state to a large extent. Whether at local, provincial or Generality level, Dutch politics was controlled by men from regent families<sup>6</sup>, with the very minimum of bureaucracy – which at the highest levels was recruited from the same set of families in any case. However, Adams sees a similar though perhaps less extreme infiltration of the organs of the embryonic state by leading families in France and England. She argues that the way these states acted, and the decisions they made, were determined by the needs and interests of these powerful families, and that the nature of this influence determined the way in which these states reacted to the economic challenges and opportunities of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Indeed, this is perhaps the central crux of the analysis: the interplay of the state, oligarchies, and emergent capitalism in each of the three coun-

<sup>4</sup> Admittedly this is changing, but all too often English, and even British, history in this period is treated as if the European dimension simply did not exist, see Scott (2000).

<sup>5</sup> Another aim of the book is to provide a gendered account of the issues though, apart from the constant reiteration of 'patriarchy', little comes of this in practice.

<sup>6</sup> The term 'regents' denotes the oligarchs who controlled the towns, and by extension the members of the broader oligarchy, including rural noble and notables, which governed the Republic as a whole.

tries largely determined the very different ways in which they would enter the modern world.

In her discussion of the economic developments of the period, Adams places great emphasis on extra-European trade, and on the chartered companies which were the chief protagonists in this sector of the economy. Although this is nowhere explicitly stated, this stress on the colonial trades – and no other sector of the economy is given more than a passing reference – suggests that her underlying assumption is that European colonial trade in the seventeenth and eighteenth century was the essential motor of economic growth and eventually of the initial development of modern capitalism. Adams argues that the specific character of the familial state is revealed by the distinctive nature of the interaction of government and colonial trading

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companies in the Dutch Republic, France and England. Indeed, Adams seems almost to award marks to each of these states for their relative success in dealing with the challenges of extra-European trade, particularly that to the East. The French state failed to respond effectively to these challenges, the Dutch faltered after an impressive start, while only England triumphed in the end. Failure and relative failure in colonial trade is seen as a sign that the French and the Dutch states lost their way, and only England was able to stay on the high road to the modern state.

Apart from the rather teleological nature of the argument, it can be suggested that such an emphasis on the importance of the chartered companies and of colonial trade in general for overall economic development is questionable, certainly in

the Dutch case. Dutch economic success in the seventeenth century was a complex phenomenon involving a highly efficient and market-oriented agriculture, a strong fishing and manufacturing sector geared to export, as well as its obvious trading successes throughout Europe. Despite the obvious success of the VOC (Dutch East India Company), colonial trade was not the cause but rather the consequence of Dutch economic success at home and in Europe. Even more clearly Dutch economic decline was not a result of failures in colonial trade, but rather of a combination of deeper-seated problems, including a long-term depression in European agricultural prices which set in about the middle of the seventeenth century, the inexorable collapse of the Dutch staple market in the face of growing competition, and rampant protectionism in countries which had formerly

been important customers for Dutch exports. A recent study of Anglo-Dutch economic relations in the crucial period of English rise and Dutch decline places most emphasis on trade within Europe together with the Atlantic trades, and allots only a subordinate rôle to the VOC and the East India Company (Ormrod, 2003, esp. chapters 9 and 10). Adams' overemphasis on the colonial trades sets the whole argument off balance and must be considered a major weakness of her overall thesis. Allied to this overestimation of the economic importance of extra-European trade is a similar exaggeration of the political importance of the colonial interest in all three countries. In the Dutch Republic there was certainly an intimate relationship between the chartered companies and the civil authorities, and this was especially important in the case of the VOC. Many regents had significant investments in the VOC, at least by the eighteenth century (Prak, 1985:117; de Jong, 1985:109; Kooijmans, 1985:104), and local regent families dominated the regional chambers of the company, but this was more a matter of the regents using the VOC for their own (patrimonial?) ends rather than a colonial faction infiltrating the government. In general the Dutch economy was much too diverse to encourage the dominance of any particular interest group; only with the collapse of the staple market did the trade with the East Indies become vitally important.

One consequence of Adams' tendency to seek the economic grail in colonies and colonial trade is her curious remarks on the loss of Brazil by the Dutch West India Company. She comes close to blaming the Dutch for a fatal lack of foresight in failing to use the full resources of the state to cling on to their foothold there. She argues for the potential of Brazil as a protected market for Dutch goods, and so as an important hedge against economic decline. There is something decidedly unrealistic, not to say anachronistic, in this line of argument. Brazil lost its strategic importance for the Dutch with the Portuguese revolt against Spanish rule in 1640 and the final peace between the Dutch Republic and Spain in 1648. At the same time free trade with Brazil seemed an attractive alternative to the heavy military and naval expenditure which would have been necessary to hold on to the colony. Given these considerations it made sense for the Dutch to cut their losses in Brazil. In any case, the chances of establishing a colony of settlement were slim: what failed in New Netherland was hardly likely to succeed in Brazil. Incidentally, far from the West India Company being able to infiltrate government, it was the disinvestment from the WIC by leading Amsterdam regents which decisively weakened the political clout of the company.

It is arguable that Adams' study should be approached from a rather different direction than that adopted so far. Perhaps it should be read as intended to enlighten sociologists about important aspects of early modern European society rather than to provide historians with insights they have not already realised for themselves. When she states that her aim is to 'show that gender and family are neglected constituents of the development of state power and institutions' it can only be concluded that she is thinking of sociologists and political theorists rather than historians – certainly not those special-

ising in the early modern period. However, even seen from this angle problems remain. Firstly there is the use of dense technical language in an attempt to give precision and the impression of conceptual novelty. When Adams writes

The male heads of elite families...were also wedded to a vision of intergenerational patriarchal patrimonial authority. [155]

is this saying anything more than that such elite families looked to the future as well as the present and that they held on to their own?<sup>7</sup> Similarly, when she stresses the importance of

a distinctive patrimonial institutional configuration – linking a merchant capitalist class, an estatist state, and the elite patriarchal families – was a central factor in the formation of a peculiar national center and the spectacular ascent of the Dutch [77]

the ponderous phrasing cannot disguise the fact that underneath it all she is stating the obvious. No doubt Adams believes that such statements are more than re-descriptions and offer a more precise terminology. Certainly she is able to use these formulations for the comparison between the Dutch state and France and England, as well as in the linked discussion of the nature and development of the state in this period. However, even here her discussion of the nature of

the state remains rather too abstract, and the links she posits between the development of these three states and their respective colonial experiences, partly in consequence, are unconvincing.

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<sup>7</sup> Note her use of 'male heads' rather than simply 'elite families'.

Nevertheless, this study can serve as a very useful prophylactic against anachronistic assumptions about the nature of the state and the dynamics of society in this period, and not just for the benefit of sociologists unfamiliar with early modern Europe. In particular the stress on the way in which elite families not so much controlled as constituted the state as it developed and consolidated in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is to be welcomed. However, the political dominance of the nobility throughout Europe during the Early Modern period is well established, and it is not clear in what ways Adams' emphasis on families is an advance on this perception. Indeed, at one point she states that a key factor in the rise of the Dutch Republic was

an institutional nexus fusing a set of elite patriarchal families with a merchant capitalist class.  
[4]

In other words, the Dutch state was run by a combination of nobles and urban regents, the latter with – initially at least – strong links to trade and manufactures. There is nothing new about this interpretation of the political system of the Dutch Republic, and Adams' only innovation in this respect is her emphasis on the vital political rôle of merchant groups trading to the East – and this seems at the very least a serious overestimation of the political importance of this interest group, and very possibly a fundamental misinterpretation of the way Dutch politics worked at this time. France was even more unambiguously dominated both socially and politically by the nobility until the very end of them *ancien régime*. In the case of England, the political power of the Whig aristocracy in the eighteenth century is a reminder that, despite the vigorous economic developments from the late seventeenth century onwards, things were not so very different there. So all three countries were dominated politically by a combination of nobles and quasi-nobles, with a varying and uncertain admixture of leading merchant groups. The traditional nobility (both sword and robe) were more predominant in France, the urban regents in the Dutch Republic, peers and gentry in England. That such social groups were, to use two of Adams' key terms, both patriarchal and patrimonial, almost goes without saying. Concern with family honour and continuity is a basic characteristic of the European nobility, and merchant elites

too sought the social advancement of their families – often by seeking entry into the nobility.<sup>8</sup> It is hard to see how the concept of the 'familial state' offers either significant conceptual advance or improved analytical rigour than such admittedly rather general perceptions. Indeed, such terminology by stressing the individual family rather than the social class or order to which it belonged seriously downplays the influence of these broader groupings – but perhaps this is part of the point of Adams' re-description of this aspect of European social history.

*The Familial State* is a brief but dense treatment of some of the crucial political and economic issues of the seventeenth and eighteenth century in Europe. It constitutes a salutary reminder that, despite their obvious differences, the Dutch Republic, France and England were all dominated politically, socially and economically by elites that were in significant ways very similar. Throughout this period Europe was dominated politically and socially by urban and rural – especially the latter – nobles and notables, and this remained the case whatever the formal political system. The political power of urban oligarchs with, initially at least, strong connections with trade and manufactures was much greater in the Dutch case than elsewhere. Moreover, the dominance of these urban regents was greatest – indeed almost complete – in Holland which was by far the most important province politically and economically. So an examination of the rôles of such elites in relation to the development of the state is welcome. However, Adams' discussion of the nature of the state in this period is rather too abstract, and her attempt to link the development of the state with the degree of success of the colonial enterprises of the three countries remains unconvincing. This is an important study, but in the end it is far from clear that analysis in terms of the 'familial state' represents an advance on more conventional interpretations of the dynamics of the early modern European state.

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<sup>8</sup> This proved impossible in the Dutch Republic as there was no monarch to create new nobles. It would have been theoretically possible for the provincial states – who regarded themselves as sovereigns – to create nobles, but in practice they never did, with the consequence that the Dutch nobility were severely reduced in numbers by the end of the Republic period.

## Turning Patrimony against Itself

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1.

Weber's analysis of patrimonialism is a foundational starting point of *The Familial State* and to fully gauge the scope of the book's contributions it is helpful to start with Weber, again. My own starting point is Weber's considerations regarding the economic impact of patrimonial domination (*Economy and Society*, chapter XIII). His diagnosis runs as follows: in a patrimonial system of rule, i.e. a system of rule characterized by the private appropriation of public office, the ruler and his officials are only limited by tradition. The consequences are twofold. First, institutional innovations are precarious since they do not enjoy the "sanctity of tradition." Second, new kinds of acquisition and enterprise are "exposed to the arbitrariness of the ruler and of his officials" (Weber 1968: 1094). This point applies in particular to property rights. Investments can be wiped out by one single stroke. Arbitrary power begets instability which in turn undermines sustained investments over time. "The patrimonial state lacks the political and procedural *predictability*, indispensable for capitalist development" (Weber 1968: 1095; his emphasis).

In light of this diagnosis, we would expect any patrimonial system of governance to undermine rather than to enhance collective capacity. More to the point: we would *not* expect such a system to lay the ground for an institutional setting prone to innovation. The first contribution of *The Familial State* is to point out this paradox and to document it extensively in the case of the Netherlands in the early modern period. This case has demonstrative value: here is a country in which patrimonial practices were rife and pervasive. Far from hindering the development of state institutions, these practices were key to the geopolitical rise of the Dutch state and its hegemonic position. Two questions then come to the fore. Which factors made these developments possible? How does this paradox contribute to our understanding of institution building and state formation? *The Familial State* provides illuminating answers to both questions.

2.

Large scale organizational endeavors require the formation of cliques of agents that behave as initiating nuclei and have the capacity to build institutions. Stated in more abstract terms: cooperative efforts rest on nodes of agency. Patrimonial practices provide a breeding ground for these cliques and nodes by webbing a network of interrelated ties geared to shared interests and coordination. The groups thus constituted may be exclusive. But they can also be "initiating nuclei" and as such they create the condition for institution-building (p. 98). In this respect these groups may be viewed as a necessary and constitutive moment in the process of institution building. One of Adams' key contributions for the theory of state formation is to restore the significance of this constitutive moment. In the Dutch state, patrimonial practices welded corporate families to the state. Remains the intriguing question: how can these practices serve a collective project that is antithetical to their underlying logic?

Two key factors stand out in Adams' account: decentralized rule and regulated competition. Both are of broad theoretical significance. They explain how the logic of patrimony can be turned against itself. Consider the impact of decentralized rule. The case of the Netherlands in the seventeenth century exemplifies a system of rule in which no clique and no single actor had the capacity to monopolize executive power. The contrast with the Florentine case, which Adams underscores (p. 101), is striking. In the confederate structure of the Dutch state, sites of sovereignty—town councils, provincial representative assemblies, and the States General—were too numerous to be taken over by one single family (p. 104). Very significantly Adams establishes a negative correlation between the scope of decentralization and the instability of governance: "the uncertainty that was endemic to patrimonial rule was minimized when corporate elites controlled the levers of power—that is, when the monarch or stadholder was politically subordinated to the estates, as in the Netherlands of the Golden Age" (p. 21).

The second factor is the regulated exercise of competition. This point relates to the corporate and mercantilist setup of the Dutch state. Families were competing for offices in a corporate setting.

This setting induced a fair amount of competition and elicited an interest in self-regulation. It is very striking to observe that early on, in the second half of the sixteenth century, members of the regent class were pushing for the abolition of venal office-holding and that the proscription of venality acquired legal status (p. 43, p. 81). As we could have expected, this proscription was far from being fully enforced. The interesting point is that family heads invoked these rules when they sought to limit the margin of maneuver of their competitors (pp. 93-94, pp. 145-146). Competition thus was regulated and this regulation limited the destructive logic of private appropriation.

*How can patrimonial practices serve a collective project that is antithetical to their underlying logic?*

3.

Stasis and decline are the flip sides of hegemony. Regarding these flip sides one of the strengths of *The Familial State* is to propose an account which, from an analytical viewpoint, is highly consistent with Adams' explanation of the Dutch anomaly. The focus is on the interplay between actors' capacity for institutional innovations and the impact of structural constraints. The question *The Familial State* invites us to pursue further from a comparative perspective is whether, and in which capacity, elite groups had the ability to overcome or reverse politico-economic developments that had a structural character. On this point, Adams' formulations are compatible with two possible interpretations, and it is not entirely clear which one, in the end, we should endorse.

Taking full advantage of the analytical resources provided by her comparative framework, Adams shows that patrimonial actors in England, France and the Netherlands sought to entrench and consolidate their privileges by drafting cartel-like agreements specifying who was entitled to what. These covenants took the form of family syndicates of officeholders in France (p. 172), elite arrangements determining the distribution of proprietary office-holding in England (p. 184), and

"contracts of correspondence" formalizing "the distribution of city offices in written succession rules" in the Netherlands (p. 146). These different schemes exemplify the drive for monopoly characteristic of patrimonial appropriation (Weber 1978: 1028). Yet, in spite of these similarities, these three states underwent very different political trajectories with strikingly dissimilar outcomes in terms of institutional capacity.

Clearly, exogenous factors related to the dynamics of trade patterns played a role in these trajectories (pp. 138-144). Still, Adams argues that the variance in outcomes should not be reduced to these exogenous constraints. Whether the focus is on England, France, or the Netherlands, her conclusion is that "key elite actors ... had a hand in shaping the different resolutions ... to analogous institutional limits and quandaries" (p. 201). As far as the Dutch regents were concerned, the problems of state management they faced ultimately were "collective action problems" and these, as collective action problems, were "susceptible of solution" (p. 154). Thus, actors had their say. The type of responses they came up with had a crucial influence on institutional trajectories and state capacities. This observation suggests that the decline of the Dutch state was not a foregone conclusion. If so, that is, if indeed elite actors had some leeway in shaping different solutions to the challenges they faced, we should be able to identify missed opportunities, possible turning points or counterfactual scenarios through a close investigation of their conflicts and strategic motivations.

When we narrow the focus down, however, this suggestion becomes elusive. The diagnosis Adams brings into relief is one that emphasizes not missed opportunities but either a lack of alternatives or an inexorable logic. In the first half of the eighteenth century, the Dutch regents crafted ingenious pacts allowing them to secure their grip over corporate and political office by making their positions the property of their lineage—the so-called "contracts of correspondence." These covenants were indeed innovative and they sanctioned cooperative strategies. But in setting up political cartels shutting off competition for office, these actors were behaving in true patrimonial fashion. They were doing nothing else except bringing about the logic inherent to their position. They

were acting as the agents of the structures in which they were embedded.

Collective action was therefore possible but along the lines set by patrimonial consolidation. These instances of collective coordination far from challenging structural developments were contributing further to their implementation. True, there were pressures from below and proposals for reform coming from the top (p. 155, p. 159). Yet, the conclusion emerging from this account is that these initiatives never materialized. Willem IV's "Proposition for a Limited Free Port" (1751), which Adams singles out as a significant moment, was "stillborn" (p. 159). By then, the state had the structure of a pyramid of cartels embedded in one another and this structure made coordination among the various loci of sovereignty highly problematic. Furthermore, the regents were obviously incapable of moving beyond their patriarchal understanding of patrimonial authority (p. 155).

If historical close-ups reveal stillborn attempts at reforms and if the analytical narrative overall says very little about the moments in which alternative historical possibilities came to the fore, it seems reasonable to conclude that there were no such moments, no real missed opportunities and no conflict that could have reversed the logic of patrimonial decline. Adams endorses this interpretation when she claims that "fiscal crisis and state incapacity were *the legacy of structures* that vested power and policy making in the hands of elite family heads committed to protecting their local—at most provincial—identities and positions" (p. 144; my emphasis).

4.

Whenever we speak of patrimonialism, the reference is to the rule of the *pater*. Weber theorizes this connection from a genetic perspective. The prototype of patrimonial governance is the household. The patrimonial ruler manages his realm as he would manage his household. Hence, his tasks of governance include allocating goods across generation according to rules of traditional wisdom. But, as Adams points out (p. 32), Weber takes the etymology of patrimony at face value, interpreting the rule of the father as a fact of nature grounded in biological differences across sexes (*Economy and Society*, II, p. 1007).

*This is historical sociology at its best: dense, rich, beautifully written and analytically cogent.*

*The Familial State* calls into question this naturalized conception of patriarchy. Adams deploys this critique by historicizing the phenomenon from two complementary perspectives. First, she points out the extent to which in early modern Europe strategies of aggrandizement and interest consolidation were primarily strategies of *patrilineal* succession. Second, her descriptive analyses fleshes out the crystallization of a new cultural understanding of patriarchal familial honor. Two different idioms of honor can be distinguished: one stressing state service, the other, the aristocracy of blood. The interesting observation is that the early modern period in western Europe is a time when these two conceptions of honor get conflated (p. 97). The Netherlands are particularly representative of this cultural evolution. Adams notes for instance that even the princes of the House of Orange portrayed themselves as "state officers" (p. 97).

5.

As these few comments make clear, Adams' original, provocative and extremely enlightening analyses explore multiple terrains of investigation—state formation, the anthropology of familial honor, the institutionalization of patrimonial practices, the political economy of chartered companies, class structures and geopolitical competition in early modern Europe as well as the theory of historical developments—and they pace these terrains with extreme relevance and stylistic brio. The literary style of *The Familial State* enhances the originality of this comparative inquiry for it constantly displays mastery and precision. This book exemplifies the type of achievements historical sociology can accomplish when it seriously confronts the requirements and the challenges of theoretical elaboration *and* historical research proper. This is historical sociology at its best: dense, rich, beautifully written and analytically cogent.

## More about States and Families: Rejoinder to Charrad, Ermakoff, Price and Tilly

Julia Adams  
Yale University

It's an honor to have outstanding colleagues from the field of social science history engage with one's work, and a great opportunity to learn from the critical conversation. Let me begin by saying that I basically agree with three out of four of the respondents (Leslie Price being the exception, as I will detail below) about the nature of the overarching argument that the book offers. But *all* the respondents have selected and engaged with different portions of that argument in ways that are intellectually interesting, I hope not just for me.

Ivan Ermakoff puts his finger on the first problem that I hoped to bring to the fore, the paradox of Dutch ascension – that is, how could the small and politically rickety early modern Netherlands become the world's first hegemonic power? Because, in part, of that same ramshackle structure, the 'familial state.' The patrimonial practices that seem on the face of it so awkward could provide a nucleus for creative forms of collective agency in institution-building. They were not the only factor in the rise of the Dutch Republic, I argue, but a crucial piece of the overall puzzle, there as well as in the trajectories of its close contenders, France and England.

Ermakoff's crisp formulation of this aspect of the work as a dialectic of decentralized rule and regulated competition opens the way for me to underline the importance of *what* early modern elites were learning to accumulate and regulate. The key assets that were familially held, and that elite families nurtured and fought for, were intergenerational liens on organizational niches. These patrimonial positions delivered defensible monopoly claims to flows of economic resources, power and prestige. They also nurtured a more expansive, family-lineal, sense of self than today's reflexive utilitarian vision can readily compass. Thus when Leslie Price asks whether my "dense technical language" and "ponderous phrasing" (ouch!) is saying "anything more than that elite families looked to the future as well as the present and that

they held on to their own," the answer is, well, yes! There may be a more Shakespearean way to express it, but the rigidities of the eighteenth-century European states only make sense if we take account of the peculiarly patrimonial nature of what elite family heads held in their grasp.

And hold it they did, creatively and tenaciously. While organizational alternatives presented themselves in the 18th century, both as tacit international models and explicit points of discussion periodically raised at home, they didn't find favor with the Dutch elite. This brings me to another astute point raised by Ermakoff, who remarks on the historical irony that the representatives of the Dutch family cartels acted as agents, but as agents of the structures in which they were embedded. Were the patriarchs that controlled the patrimonial state and its colonial spinoffs so hamstrung by their seeming success that any genuine alternative organization was impossible? On the principle that "it ain't over 'til it's over," I would rather say improbable. The openings for decisive elite counteraction in the Netherlands were few and hedged about by powerful pressures both in and outside of what was a particularly dispersed family-state system. But even within that frame, the elite had their chances, their possibilities. If the urban patriciates had evolved a way to govern in tandem – or if Willem V as patriarchal *überrauber* had had an ounce of organizational charisma – or if would-be reformers and revolutionaries had managed to chivvy others in a more developmental direction ... etc. We can imagine and explore a series of *ceteris paribus* conditions and mechanisms, each inevitably partial, each setting limits for the others. The book engages in this sort of exploration (and sometimes counterfactual speculation) with regard to the role of the elite in the end of Dutch hegemony as a matter of epistemological principle, disciplined by theory and close comparisons to France and England. History escapes closure even as it becomes past. But beyond that I also take seriously what I interpret as Ermakoff's injunctions to theoretically attend to and historically excavate, in as fine-grained a way as possible, actors' understandings of and experiments in collective action projects. Ermakoff's own work is exemplary in this regard. If this isn't already a future direction for historical sociology and comparative history, then it should be.

Mounira Charrad offers a wonderful précis and critique of the specifically familial and gendered aspects of the book's argument. I'm happy about this, because for me this is a central part of what the book is all about (and, frankly, what macro-sociology needs more of). I also agree with much of what she writes here, and am excited by the emergent links and potential conversations between my and others' research on modernizing Europe and her work on family kinship politics in the 20th and 21st century Middle East and North Africa. The questions that she raises at the end of her comment are important not just for the couple of thousand (?) historical sociologists out there, but for the globe and the future. There won't be a functioning modern state in Iraq, for example, until the patriarchal kin groupings are coopted, absorbed and transformed. As a first step, in the academy, they must be seen to matter as actors, part of the changing macropolitical landscape and not some timeless extrusion of tradition.

Where Charrad and I may disagree, however, is whether "patriarchy" is assumed to be a constant in the context of this book – in this case among the early modern European elites. First let me say that I find "patriarchy" most useful when understood as father-rule, not in the more generic meaning of male domination. Symbolically, patriarchs govern by virtue of calling on signs of paternity, and by linking these signs to others (e.g. God-the-father etc) in service of collective political projects. On this basis they appeal for obedience, collaboration, and other forms of acquiescence or action. (Which is not to say that they actually receive those things!) Socially, patriarchs relate to one another, their staffs and subjects, in their performative paternal roles, which are always relational (involving ties to mothers, children, and so on). This is patriarchy as an ideal-type; whether these signs and

*“One knows one's weak points so well, that it's rather bewildering to have the critics overlook them and invent others.”*

relations predominate statistically in any historical social system remains a separate question.

Historically, though, I see patriarchy changing character in early modern Europe precisely because the dimensions of 'fatherhood' and 'rule' were institutionally interlocked. *The Familial State* treats a core dialectic present especially sharply by the 18th century, in which the expansion of European states organized around father-rulers aggrandized the ideal, expectations and powers of ruling fathers at the same time as they restricted any individual father-ruler's freedom of action in the family as well as the state (to leave his patrimonial property where he would, for example, or to exit a ruling clique). This situation made for certain predictable dynamics and challenges – including anti-patriarchal rebellions inside and outside ruling families. Sometimes these could be institutionally managed by the ruling group (e.g. the relations between British kings and the autonomous courts of their disaffected heirs), sometimes not (e.g. the French Revolution). I look forward to investigating, with Charrad and others, the extended implications of such state-family interlocks for today's patriarchal politics, in the Middle East and elsewhere.

When I read Leslie Price's review, I was reminded of something Edith Wharton once said. "After all," she wrote ruefully, "one knows one's weak points so well, that it's rather bewildering to have the critics overlook them and invent others." In most of his response, Price seems to be engaging with another book altogether. For example, he writes that my "underlying assumption is that European colonial trade in the seventeenth and eighteenth century was the essential motor of economic growth and eventually of the initial development of modern capitalism." Since the book is neither about "economic growth" nor the genesis of "modern capitalism" en bloc; and since I believe that the marxian language of "essential motors" is an absolute dead letter, it seems highly unlikely that any of these assumptions could be mine.

Perhaps the problem is that Price expected the book to conform to the earlier readings in historical sociology that he cites, and that shaped how he understood it. The beginning of the review strongly suggests that he reads *The Familial State*

as a ‘second wave’ comparative historical tome at its most sweepingly ambitious. Yet it isn’t, and was never meant as, an exhaustive explanation of an historical transition so multi-faceted as the genesis of a modern capitalist economy! Unless I was asleep during the final proof-check, there can’t be a sentence in the book that supports that interpretation. *The Familial State* may traverse countries and centuries, but it focuses its analytical narrative more narrowly on a core constituent of the rise and fall of *states*: a shared mechanism of rule, designed and perfected by the patriarchs (generally male, occasionally female) who inhabited it, gained or lost by it.

It could be that Leslie Price and I simply think differently about how early modern institutions and social systems worked, and that this is the source of his systematic misreading. In this response at least, Price emphasizes single causes and institutionally separate, modern, spheres of social action. For example, he insists that it must be *either* colonial *or* non-colonial trade that was important to Dutch ascension. But it was both (as Jonathan Israel and other historians have made clear). Price insists that the regents *either* used the VOC *or* the VOC used them. Yet the merchant-regents first authorized and built the great trading companies and then the companies restructured regent family bases of power. Finally, for Price, there are families and there are states, which sometimes intersect, but familial states there are not. One of the most interesting features of the early modern period is the partial emergence of differentiated institutions – the contested, often bloody, struggles and processes by which polity came apart from family, economy, church, and so forth. Price seems to assume that these processes were already accomplished, and that actors maneuvered their way around them instrumentally.

Finally, where Price and I disagree strongly is over the disciplinary belongingness or flavor of arguments and forms of knowledge. He sums up this part of his argument thusly: “Perhaps [*The Familial State*] should be read as intended to enlighten sociologists about important aspects of early modern European society rather than to provide historians with insights they have already realised for themselves.” This is charmingly condescending, but is it correct? I don’t think so. Price draws the differences between historians and soci-

ologists too sharply, and then tries to assign particular arguments to one disciplinary category or the other. But historians disagree among themselves about the very points that Price flattens into a single “historians’ position” – there are terrific debates among historians over, for example, the relationship among colonial and non-colonial trades and state power in early modern Europe. Anyway, I genuinely think that the time is past for disciplinary saber-rattling. Let’s get down to the business of discussing, arguing about and maybe even making progress on the problems at hand.

Charles Tilly (who is sociologist, historian *and* political scientist) on the other hand has captured the essence of what the book is trying to do, and I’m delighted that he thinks that the project is an important one for the field. With respect to Tilly’s two main criticisms, though, I’m guilty as charged. First, there are indeed no formal network analyses here. I agree that formal network analysis would be an excellent thing for all those who study early modern patriarchal patrimonial states, and that there are some important questions that cannot be answered without deploying it or some substitutable method. For example, imagine what we could do with an aggregated data base of as many of the Dutch ruling towns as possible, for systematic comparisons of the links between variable family strategies and local governance. Still, had I undertaken this task, I suspect that I would never have completed the book, unless with the help of a fleet of graduate students. *The Familial State* is artisanal historical sociology, with all the correlative strengths and weaknesses. But beyond the case of a particular book, I believe (and I’m sure Tilly would agree) that the time is ripe for work that systematically links what have been unduly separate scholarly terrains: the analysis of political action via networks; collective imaginaries and collective action (as Ermakoff underlines), and finally, states as institutions.

Second is Tilly’s point that the book limits itself, for the most part, to elite men. This is absolutely true. *The Familial State* doesn’t treat either women or the populace very much, even in their contributions to the reproduction of ongoing social order. The focus is on the patriarchs themselves, their activities, interrelations, the individual and collective strategies they devised and executed, and their responses to the global impact of those

strategies, down the line. I saw this as important and virtually unexplored comparative historical territory. Perhaps, too, I wanted to help demolish the persistent confusion between studying gender on the one hand and studying women on the other that continues to dog the macro social sciences, and not just the subfield of the study of early modern European politics and states. But I think what is needed now is just what Tilly calls for: syntheses of the top down and the bottom up. To that I would add (and I hope in the spirit of all the critics) syntheses of men's and women's histories, of structure and agency, of history and sociology. Dissertations, anyone?

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## Recent Dissertations

*("Recent Dissertations" will be a regular newsletter feature.)*

### THROUGH SWEAT AND TEARS: HIGH SCHOOL BASEBALL AND THE SOCIALIZATION OF JAPANESE BOYS

Thomas Stephen Blackwood

University of Michigan

2005

This dissertation examines a facet of Japanese education which has been largely neglected in English scholarship, extracurricular clubs, even though such clubs are an extremely important activity for a majority of Japanese high school students. While most previous studies of Japanese education emphasize "objective" outcomes such as academic skills or occupational attainment, this study is unique in that it focuses on the participants' subjective understandings of their experiences. Through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and surveys, it explores the subjective meanings that participation in high school baseball holds for Japanese high school students and graduates in forming their identities, world-views, and friendships.

In order to avoid producing a shallow, homogenous caricature of Japanese high school baseball, or Japanese people in general, however, this study also deconstructs the history and institutions of Japanese high school baseball to show that what is often considered "natural" or "Japanese" about high school baseball is actually a carefully constructed turn of the 20th century ideology, strictly regulated by the Japan High School Baseball Federation (JHBF) through today. Thus, while research in the West has been largely inconclusive regarding the socializing ability of sports, I conclude that high school baseball is indeed educational in Japan, but not for reasons intrinsic to the sport itself (or to Japanese culture in general). Rather, it is due to the strict administrative and ideological control of the JHBF, an institution established primarily to ensure that high school baseball in Japan was, first and foremost, educational, as opposed to recreational or commercial.

### RADICALS IN OUR MIDST: THE AMERICAN CRITIQUE OF CAPITALISM IN THE CHICAGO TWO-PARTY SYSTEM, 1833-1877

Cedric de Leon

University of Michigan

2004

Among the most resilient explanations for the absence of socialism in America is the obstacle posed by the two-party system. My research suggests that two ideological props of classical socialism – those of class struggle and a strong state – emerged for a brief time within the two-party system during the Jacksonian Era. Rather than ask "why no socialism?" I seek to understand, given the presence of these two foundational elements, why they did not coalesce into a coherent anti-capitalist political program as they did in other industrializing nations. Broadly speaking, my answer foregrounds the role of party formation and its relationship to class, race and political discourse in the process of social change. Based on a content analysis of Chicago newspapers from the Jacksonian Era to the end of Reconstruction, the dissertation focuses on how the Civil War undermined a longstanding critique of wage dependency as slavery and thereby transformed Chicago's mainstream parties and white working class into champions of "free labor." Though American exceptionalism is as much a question of party formation as it is of class formation, the historical and social science scholarship has largely focused on the latter. This dissertation combines studies of whiteness and the discourse analysis current in the class formation literature with recent conceptual innovations around the use of turning points and sequencing in historical sociology, to address the issue of party formation head-on, and thereby shed fresh light on a perennial sociological puzzle.

*"Which states cooperated to address the traffic in women and girls and why did they do so?" -- Stephanie A. Limoncelli*

ETHNOGRAPHIC EMPIRE: IMPERIAL CULTURE AND COLONIAL STATE FORMATION IN MALAYA AND THE PHILIPPINES, 1880-

1940

Daniel PS Goh

University of Michigan

2005

British Malaya and the American Philippines offer us two puzzles in colonial state formation: (1) the transformation of British protection in Malaya to centralized bureaucratic rule and American territorial assimilation in the Philippines to the Commonwealth protection of client Filipino elites, (2) the successful agricultural development of Malaya while the Philippines became mired in economic dependency. This dissertation argues that colonial ethnographic representations created the discursive field of political struggle over native policy. Pioneer colonialists developed ethnographic discourse from precolonial travel literature to transcribe native resistance into comparable representations of racial difference. Pioneer ethnography then influenced official ethnography, creating ambivalent representations of native societies as progressive or degenerate.

The first puzzle is explained by the ability of the native elite to politically mobilize against unfavorable policy in the context of colonialist policy struggles. The political beliefs of colonial officials shaped their preference for different positions in the field of ethnographic-political discourse, which mediated their struggle over native policy. The Filipino elites exploited the ambivalent representations to gain political concessions, while the Malay aristocrats were unable to do the same to stem bureaucratic centralization.

Colonial officials adopted economic programs based on their ethnographic views, but the institutional structures resulting from native policy modified success. The Americans failed to develop the Philippines because they were either too estranged from Filipino planters to influence them or too identified with them to prevent corruption. The British succeeded in resolving chronic labor shortages when they distanced themselves from the Malay elites and Western planters.

RIGHT TO WATER, RIGHT TO LIGHT: STATE AUTONOMY, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND UTILITY PRIVATIZATION IN CENTRAL AMERICA, 1980-2002

LaDawn Haglund

New York University

2005

This dissertation focuses on the institutionalization of public goods, viewed through the lens of neoliberalization in the water and electricity sectors of El Salvador and Costa Rica. Despite the different political and institutional histories of these countries, both have built state institutions to address public goods, environmental protection, and holistic planning. But the institutionalization of market-led reform (privatization, deregulation, marketization) has created institutional barriers to state-led development, weakened the state's capacity and autonomy to employ alternatives to the neoliberal model, and undermined accountability mechanisms designed to make states respond to social and economic rights. This has undermined a well-functioning model of public goods provision in Costa Rica, and precluded the development of alternatives to the elite-dominated model in El Salvador. The suppression of state- or community-led alternatives for the provision of public goods is driven by neoliberalism, not simply by state failure. This reality is at the root of tensions between democratization and liberalization.

The theoretical analysis of institutions, state capacity and autonomy, and "embedding" under neoliberal and accountability models is empirically grounded in a comparative-historical investigation of primary and secondary sources, and buttressed by 60 semi-structured "key informant" interviews with officials from state agencies, business and labor groups, and civil society organizations, carried out over nine months of fieldwork in Central America. This work seeks to contribute to the development of a framework for categorizing different "public goods regimes" that can help explain both why people do not have adequate water and electricity provision, and what is to be done. The answer presented herein is that both states and markets fail, but that state capacity-building, autonomy from restrictions on state action, and accountability to citizens is a preferred solution to marketization and privatization.

## THE BRITISH COLONIAL LINEAGES OF DESPOTISM AND DEVELOPMENT

Matthew Lange  
Brown University  
2004

This project analyzes the developmental legacies of British colonialism. It recognizes that states are vital determinants of diverse developmental processes, that the structure of a number of state institutions were shaped by colonialism, and that colonialism might therefore have long-term effects on development. To investigate this possibility, I focus on British colonialism and combine statistical and comparative historical methods. First, I operationalize the extent of direct and indirect rule and find that the extent of direct rule is positively related to a number of developmental indicators. Next, I provide detailed comparative analyses of Mauritius, Sierra Leone, Guyana, and Botswana. The comparative historical analysis provides strong evidence that the state structures of direct rule left positive developmental legacies relative to indirect rule. In all, the analysis provides consistent evidence that the form of British colonialism had long-term effects on development but that this legacy is mixed: despotism with indirect rule, development with direct.

*Chicago's party system and the absence of American socialism*

*The effects of British colonialism on development*

*Anti-trafficking movements in the Netherlands, France, and Italy*

*Gender, race, and status in Cuba*

*Public goods in El Salvador and Costa Rica*

*State formation in Malaya and the Philippines*

*The porcelain industry in Tokugawa Japan*

*High school baseball in Japan*

## THE POLITICS OF HUMANITARIANISM: STATES, REFORMERS, AND THE INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT TO COMBAT THE TRAFFIC IN WOMEN, 1875-1960

Stephanie A. Limoncelli  
University of California, Los Angeles  
2006

In the late 1800s, the first international movement to combat the traffic in women for prostitution brought together European and other countries throughout the world. Which states cooperated to address the traffic in women and girls and why did they do so? Social science scholars interested in the formation of and adherence to international norms would view the anti-trafficking movement as an example of the successful creation of a global humanitarian moral order prohibiting the sexual exploitation of women. Through a comparative-historical analysis of archival materials from the involved international voluntary associations (IVAs) and the League of Nations however, I show that while the issue of trafficking was initially raised as a universal humanitarian concern by one liberal feminist IVA, it was successfully usurped by another IVA comprised of purity reformers who used a nationalist rhetoric of gender protection. This latter approach appealed to state officials who sought to define the boundaries of nation and empire through the control of women and women's sexuality.

I examine this process in the Netherlands, France, and Italy, where the relative influence of the different IVAs and the varying importance of prostitution to specific state and nation-building projects led to different applications of anti-trafficking measures in metropole and colony. Using the international movement as a case study by which to examine the politics of humanitarianism, this project shows that interests and ideology are not mutually exclusive in humanitarian efforts and that IVAs may in fact operate to increase rather than challenge state power. The anti-trafficking movement resonated precisely because it could be used politically to bolster territorial interests at a time of nation-state consolidation, imperial growth and rivalry, and the development of the interstate system.

HOLY SACRAMENTS AND ILLICIT ENCOUNTERS: MARRIAGE, RACE, RELIGION, AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF STATUS HIERARCHIES IN CUBA, 1899-1940  
 Enid Lynette Logan  
 University of Michigan, Ann Arbor  
 2005

In the present dissertation, I examine the transformation of status hierarchies pertaining to gender and to race in Cuba following the final war of independence. My inquiry into these processes of sociopolitical change is focused around the vector of Catholic marriage. The chief aims of the study are to contribute to the nascent scholarship on family and gender in Cuba, and to bring discussions of gender more centrally into the burgeoning literature on race.

In the first part of the thesis, I examine a battle over the regulation of marriage that took place between Catholic Church officials, Cuban politicians, and U.S. military administrators during the first U.S. occupation of Cuba (1899-1902). In part II, I analyze a series of petitions filed on the behalf of couples seeking dispensation of the impediments of consanguinity and affinity in order to marry. Here, the construction of sexual norms and values amongst the rural poor is at the center of focus. In part III of the study, I conduct quantitative analyses of some 14,500 marriage records collected from three historic parishes between 1902 and 1940, focusing upon the racial and socioeconomic characteristics of each spouse. Here I use marriage as a lens through which to elucidate the structure and dynamics of the social construct of race. The study is based on archival research in Cuba and in the U.S.

*“The analysis provides consistent evidence that the form of British colonialism had long-term effects on development but that this legacy is mixed: despotism with indirect rule, development with direct.” -- Matthew Lange*

PORCELAIN AND POWER: MERCHANDISING POLICIES IN TOKUGAWA JAPAN, 1800-1870  
 Ariko Ota  
 Columbia University  
 2003

This dissertation examines merchandising policies of porcelains in the domains of Saga and Owari and the district of Mino in 19th-century Tokugawa Japan. The relationships of the bakufu, the regional political authorities, and those who were engaged in porcelain production and distribution shaped the distinctive type of arrangement in each of these regions. In Saga, a series of “mercantilistic” arrangements, called gengawase-shihō (display check policy), was implemented by the domain government that absorbed capacities of merchants and producers. The kuramoto-shihō (public warehouse policy) of Owari was a “corporatist” arrangement, being made through a collaboration of the guilds of producers, merchants, and the domain government. In Mino, “capitalistic” arrangements were made through competitions and struggles among various types of producers, merchants and the regional authorities.

The regional variances of the arrangements for porcelain illustrate different contexts and patterns of industrialization under the Tokugawa regime. In Saga, porcelain industry developed under the strong guidance and support of the domain authorities. In contrast, in Owari and Mino, private agents had more capacities to legitimize their interests and create capital through porcelain production and distribution.

Implementing merchandising policies caused a series of tensions and conflicts among producers, merchants, and the governmental authorities at local and national state levels. The existing relationships of regional authorities and those who were engaged in production and distribution of pottery shaped the regional variances of the issues, frequencies, and intensity of these conflicts. The arrangements also challenged the bakufu’s influence over the markets. Analysis of merchandising porcelain policies illuminates dynamics of the relationships of political authorities and the subject population that shaped the patterns of industrial development in 19th-century Tokugawa Japan.

## Comparative Historical Sociology Sessions at the 2006 ASA Annual Meeting (Montreal)

### 1. Author meets Authors:

Presider: **Nicola Beisel**, Northwestern University  
**William H. Sewell, Jr.** (*Logics of History : Social Theory and Social Transformation*)  
**Arthur Stinchcombe** (*The Logics of Social Research*).  
**Charles Tilly** (*Trust and Rule*)  
 (Organizer: **William Roy**, UCLA)

### 2. "The Smallest N: What Makes a Case Study Rigorous?"

Presider: **Monica Prasad**, Northwestern University  
 Discussant: **Andreas Wimmer**, UCLA  
**Matthias vom Hau**, Brown University, "Contested Inclusion: State Power and Nationalism in Peru"  
**Mervyn Horgan**, York University, Toronto, "Generalizing from Case Studies: The Status of the Example in Ethnographic Research"  
**Richard Hogan**, Purdue, "Validity, Reliability, and the Case Study: The Case of the Black Middle Class in Darien, Georgia, 1870"  
**Chandan Gowda**, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, "'The Village is the Problem': Seeing Like a Developmental State"  
 (Organizer: **James Mahoney**, Northwestern University)

### 3. "Historicizing Boundaries"

**Matt Wray**, University of Nevada Las Vegas, "Group Boundaries Without Groups: The Case of 'Poor White Trash.'"  
**Phylis Cancilla Martinelli**, Saint Mary's College, "Negotiating Boundaries, 1900-1930: European Spaniards in a Split Labor Market: Whites or Latinos?"  
**Elke Winter**, Humboldt University Berlin & University of Amsterdam, "Between 'American Gesellschaft' and 'Québécois Gemeinschaft': Constructing the Boundaries of the Canadian Multicultural Nation"  
**Stephanie A. Limoncelli**, UCLA, "Nation, Empire, Prostitution: Dutch and French Responses to Trafficking and Prostitution in Colonial Areas, 1875-WWI"

(Organizer: **Mara Loveman**, University of Wisconsin, Madison)

**4. "The State's Monopoly Over Violence: Its Past and Future"** Open session. Organizer: Karen Barkey, Columbia. This session will address what is happening to the state's monopoly on violence with the rise of terrorism. Terrorism not only uses violence to disrupt the social order that states are supposed to maintain, but also defy conventional mechanisms of social control used by states.

### 5. Roundtable Sessions

- Bringing Parties Back Into Sociology: Comparative Perspectives from Mexico, India, South Africa, and the United States, Roundtable organized by **Cedric de Leon**, University of Michigan; **Manali Desai**, University of Reading
- Statecraft and expertise in comparative and historical perspective  
**Curtis Sarles**, New York University "The Instatement of Order: State Initiatives and Hegemony in the Modernization of French Forest Policy"  
**Cagla Ozgur**, Johns Hopkins University "An Ethnography of Economic Decision-making In Turkey: Bureaucrats, Politicians, Experts and their Critics"  
**Kim Nguyen**, University of Maryland; Guillermo Cantor, University of Maryland College Park, "Historical and Cultural Institutional Analyses of the Emergence of Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder"  
**Suzanne Risley**, New York University, "The Sociology of Security: Sociological Approaches to Contemporary and Historical Securitization"
- Democratization in Western and Post-Communist Europe  
**Kent Redding**, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, "Political Incorporation from Above or Below? Male Suffrage Extension, Western Europe, 1840-1931"  
**Nina Bandelj**, University of California, Irvine; Bogdan Radu, University of California, Ir-

vine, "Consolidation of Democracy in Post-communist Europe"

**Andrew Buck**, University of Reading; Jeffrey Hass, University of Reading, "Contingent Democracy: Comparative Insights from Post-Socialism"

**Jeremy Straughn**, Purdue University, "The Fractal Structure of Symbolic Geography in Post-communist Europe"

#### 4. Statemaking and violence

**Chares Demetriou**, Ohio University, "Big Structures, Social Boundaries, and Identity in Cyprus, 1400 – 1700"

**Holly Reed**, Brown University, "Empire and Its Consequences: South Africa's Interventions in Mozambique"

**Matthew Lange**, McGill University; Hrag Balian, McGill, "States and Civil Unrest: A Statistical Test of the Effects of State Structure on Broad-Based Domestic Violence"

**Yu-Wen Fan**, Academia Sinica, Taiwan, "The Military and State in Taiwan During the Cold War: the "Fiscal-Military" Model Revisited"

**Pavel Osinsky**, Northwestern University, "War, State Collapse, Redistribution: Russian Revolution Revisited"

#### 5. Racial violence and national history

**Lisa Garoutte**, Ohio State University, "Elite-Race Interaction and Racial Violence: Lynching in the Deep South, 1882-1930"

**Robyn Autry**, UW-Madison, "Re-Placing Racial History: The Nationalization of Public Memory at Museums in the US and South Africa"

**Anthony Cortese**, Southern Methodist University, "The Death Penalty: A Case of Institutional Racism"

**Christopher Wetzel**, University of California, Berkeley, "Imagining the Potawatomi Nation: Gathering, Commemoration, and the Production of Collective Memory"

**We are also co-sponsoring two sessions with other sections:**

**6. Racial and Ethnic Minorities Section:** "Hurricane Katrina: Racism and the Effects of Historical Neglect" Open session. Organizer: Charles A. Gallagher, Georgia State University

#### 7. Political Sociology Section:

Presider: **Said A. Arjomand**, SUNY at Stony Brook

**Philip Gorski**, Yale, "Religious Nationalism: A Weberian Approach"

**Malika Zeghal**, University of Chicago, "Bringing the State back in the Study of Political Islam. New perspectives from Egypt and Morocco"

**Michael P. Young**, University of Texas at Austin, "Evangelical Guilt and Moral Protest in Nineteenth-Century America"

**Matthias Koenig**, University of Bamberg, "Cultural Constructions and Institutional Varieties of Secularism in Europe"

(Organizer: **Said A. Arjomand**, SUNY at Stony Brook)

## Announcements

### NEWS

The American Sociological Association council has nominated **Saskia Sassen** to be president of the International Sociological Association.

### AWARDS

**John Foran's** new book, Taking Power: On the Origins of Third World Revolutions (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), will be the co-winner of the Pacific Sociological Association's Distinguished Scholarship Award.

**Jeffrey Broadbent** has received an Abe Fellow research grant awarded by the Japan Foundation through the Social Science Research Council (awarded fall 2005 for 2006 - 2008) for a project on comparing policy networks and decision formation processes concerning global climate change and carbon management in Japan, the US, Germany and Austria.

### CALL FOR PAPERS

RESEARCH IN POLITICAL SOCIOLOGY is accepting manuscripts for Volume 16. This volume will focus on 'Politics, Neoliberalism, and Market Fundamentalism.' The primary objective of Research in Political Sociology is to publish high quality, theoretical informed empirical research in areas that advance the understanding of politics in society. Manuscripts submitted for Volume 16 can focus on issues such as social policy, business policy, trade policy, globalization, inequality, and other topics of interest to political sociology. Four copies of the manuscripts should be submitted to **Harland Prechel**, Department of Sociology, 4351 Academic Building, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843-4351. The deadline for submission of manuscripts for Volume 16 is August 30, 2006.

### CONFERENCE

International Conference on Comparative Social Sciences

July 15 - 16 , 2006

Sophia University

Tokyo, Japan

<http://www.geocities.jp/comparativesciences/top.html>

## New Publications of Section Members

Abend, Gabriel. 2006. "Styles of Sociological Thought: Sociologies, Epistemologies, and the Mexican and U.S. Quests for Truth." Sociological Theory 24(1):1-41.

Bonastia, Christopher. 2006. Knocking on the Door: The Federal Government's Attempt to Desegregate the Suburbs. Princeton University Press. An earlier article based on this research received the 2001 Reinhard Bendix Award for Best Graduate Student Paper in Comparative & Historical Sociology, and the 2001 Distinguished Graduate Student Publication Award in Political Sociology.

Fourcade-Gourinchas, Marion, and Joachim J. Savelsberg. In press. "Law Between the Global and the Local: Gains from Cross Fertilization" (Introduction to Forum on Law between the Global and the Local). Law and Social Inquiry 31.

Go, Julian. 2006. "Imperial Power and its Limits: America's Colonial Empire" in Lessons of Empire, Craig Calhoun, Frederick Cooper, and Kevin W. Moore (eds). The New Press.

Go, Julian. 2006. "Waves of American Empire, 1787-2003: US Hegemony and Imperialistic Activity from the Shores of Tripoli to Iraq." International Sociology 21(3)

Levy, Daniel, and Natan Sznaider. 2005. Memory and the Holocaust in a Global Age. Revised Version. Temple University Press.

Limoncelli, Stephanie A. 2006. "International Voluntary Associations, Local Social Movements and State Paths to the Abolition of Regulated Prostitution in Europe, 1875-1950," International Sociology, 21(1):31-59.

Mennell, Stephen. The Collected Works of Norbert Elias in English. Norbert Elias Foundation, Amsterdam.

Elias (1897–1990) is now widely recognised as one of the outstanding sociologists of the twentieth century, although he is still probably less familiar in America than in many other parts of the

world. In 1998, in a straw poll organised by Piotr Sztompka for the International Sociological Association, Elias's masterpiece *The Civilising Process* was rated seventh in a list of the top ten sociological works of the century. But in the last decades of his life, Elias produced a flood of other important books and articles. When the publication of the *Collected Works* is completed in 2011, they will comprise 17 hardback volumes, with an eighteenth containing a consolidated index.

Poulson, Stephen C. 2005. Social Movements in Twentieth-Century Iran: Culture, Ideology and Mobilizing Frameworks. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.

Savelsberg, Joachim J. "Between Worlds: Marginalities, Comparisons, Sociology." In: Lessons from Sociology: Global Perspectives on Sociological Careers, edited by Mathieu Deflem. Whitby, ON: De Sitter Publications (in press).

Savelsberg, Joachim J. "Sociological Theory in the Study of Sentencing: Lighthouse for a Traveler between Continents." In Sociological Theory and Criminological Research: Views from Europe and the United States, edited by Mathieu Deflem. Elsevier Science (in press).

Torpey, John. 2006. Making Whole What Has Been Smashed: On Reparations Politics. Harvard University Press.



**In the next issue of the Comparative and  
Historical Sociology newsletter:**

- **Contributions from William Roy, William Sewell, Jr., Nicola Beisel, Julian Go, John Foran**
- **A study of the job market in comparative historical sociology**
- **And more!**

